

# Unending mysteries of neurological disorders



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On World Brain Day, let us take resolve to understand and root out neurological disorders which are multiplying rapidly

**W**orld Brain Day is celebrated annually on July 22 to raise awareness about brain health. It was proposed by the World Federation of Neurology, established on this day in 1957, to commemorate their inception, and shine a global spotlight on neurological conditions. Awareness programmes are conducted globally on World Brain Day to help people understand the connection between brain diseases and neurological diseases. Simultaneously, World Brain Day stresses the importance of early detection and timely treatment of neurological disorders. The human brain is the control centre of the body. It works alongside the nervous system, which comprises the spinal cord, nerves, and neurons. This intricate system governs various aspects, such as your senses and muscle control. Damage to the brain can have extensive consequences

## What are Neurological Disorders?

A neurological disorder is a severe health condition. It



affects the entire nervous system--the brain, spinal cord and nerves. These diseases arise from injuries or abnormalities in the nervous system.

However, genetic disorders and unhealthy lifestyle choices may also trigger neurological diseases in humans. The Pan American Health Organization and WHO jointly reported that rising neurological disease-related disabilities and deaths present a global public health challenge.

The report further highlights that neurological conditions were responsible for approximately 533,172 deaths throughout the entire region in the year 2019. Furthermore, AIIMS reveals a shocking statistic indicating one stroke-related death every

four minutes in India. Likewise, the International Association of Cancer Registries (IARC) reports over 28,000 brain tumour cases annually in the country, resulting in 24,000 deaths per year. It is noteworthy that stroke, headache disorders, and epilepsy are the primary causes of the neurological disorder burden in India.

## Symptoms and Risk Factors

Neurological diseases generally start with symptoms such as memory loss, loss of balance, weakness in limbs, vision problems, Dizziness or vertigo, Numbness, Slurred speech, hearing problems, convulsions/seizures. It is important to recognise these symptoms for early diagnosis and treatment of neurological disorders.

## Risk Factors

- Neurological disorders can impact individuals across all age groups, but certain conditions like Parkinson's Disease primarily afflict the elderly population.

- Inborn genetic problems and immune disorders can cause neurological diseases in children,

- Vascular disorders, medication side-effects, hor-

monal disorders (thyroid, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, family history of degenerative neurologic conditions, lack of Vitamin B12, and prolonged exposure to toxins may also cause neurological disorders.

## The importance of treatment

Untreated neurological diseases can cause life-threatening conditions such as brain tumours, cerebral palsy, meningitis, multiple sclerosis, stroke, and dementia. Timely diagnosis and treatment are, therefore, crucial for managing and improving patients' quality of life. **Govt's Intervention**

The Indian Government has implemented several welfare initiatives like Ayushman Bharat—Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna to address various health conditions, including neurological disorders. Sincere and targeted efforts are essential for the effective implementation of these initiatives, which have the potential to bring about significant positive change on a large scale.

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